

Maine & New Hampshire Area Committee Work Plan for 2016

The Area Committee (AC) Executive Steering Committee met on January 21, 2016 to review the following list of issues and develop guidelines and priorities for 2016.

1. Continuation of Area Committee Executive Steering Committee (ESC): The ESC is responsible for maintaining the strategic view for the AC and developing and publishing an annual work plan for calendar year 2016. The ESC membership is comprised of the CG FOSC, Captain Michael Baroody ; ME SOSC, Peter Blanchard; NH SOSC Carroll Brown; NOAA SSC, Steve Lehmann; CG Sector Northern New England (SNNE) Response Department Head, CDR Jamie Frederick; Industry representative, Bruce Yates; and CG SNNE Contingency Planning and Readiness Staff representative and Area Committee Coordinator, Wyman Briggs. The ESC plans to meet twice in 2015 on January 21st and in June at Sector Northern New England in South Portland, ME.

2. Area Committee Membership and Meeting Schedule: The AC will strive to maintain or increase membership through various outreach efforts. Three AC meetings will be held each year (two in ME and one in NH) during the following months: April, September and December. 2016 Meetings are scheduled for:

- ❖ **April 12th at the NH DES** in Portsmouth, NH
- ❖ **September 21st at ANG** in South Portland and
- ❖ **December 8th at the ANG** in South Portland, ME

It was decided that when possible ½ of each Area Committee Meeting will be focused on a specific theme. Proposed themes for 2016 meetings include:

- April 12th Meeting: The meeting focus will be on a Port Assessment of activities in the southern portion of the zone around Portsmouth, NH. This will include a review of current and anticipated vessel traffic, changes in major marine industries that may significantly impact vessel traffic, spill response capabilities available via government agencies, the Portsmouth Navy Yard and the spill response industry.
- September 21st Meeting: The major theme will be focused on a Port Assessment focused on activities along the Maine coast. This will include an assessment of recent vessel traffic, projections for future traffic, anticipated changes in cruise ship traffic, changes in spill response capabilities, and changes on the Canadian side of the border that could impact Maine.
- December 8th Meeting: The major theme of this meeting will be focused on lessons learned and After Action Reports from spill response exercises conducted in the Fall of 2016.
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The Response subcommittee or other subcommittees will meet following AC Meetings, as needed. Various workgroups will establish their own schedules and meet as necessary.

3. Portland Area Exercises: A Spill Management Team Table-top exercise is scheduled to be held on September 7th, 2016 at the Portland Water District's Conference Room in Portland

leading up to an Industry-led Area PREP exercise in Portland or South Portland to be held in June 2017. Global Petroleum, Sprague, and Gulf have offered to serve as industry partners in planning and implementing the September, 2016 exercise.

4. Annual Command Post Functional/Full Scale Exercise: The ME/NH Area Committee has held an **annual spill management team exercise at the NH DES ICP** in OCT in each of the past 3++ years. These exercise will likely be scaled back this year due to the planning requirements for the SEP 2016 Table-top Exercise. One potential focus area may be use of the new Incident Management System Software (IMSS).

5. Area Contingency Plan Re-write Workgroup: A full re-write of the ME/NH Area Contingency Plan (ACP) was completed in DEC 2014 by the ACP rewrite workgroup. The updated ACP has been posted on Homeport and minor revisions recommended during the First Coast Guard District's review have been incorporated. Several components of the ACP could still benefit from an update including:

a. Dispersant Use: The ME/NH dispersant pre-authorization plan was updated as part of the DEC 2014 ACP update and a Draft ME and NH Dispersant Authorization Plan has been developed by the ME/NH ACP workgroup and is being promoted by the First District office for adoption throughout New England. This adoption process will likely require ME/NH input and coordination over the next 12 months. Getting a regional plan approved in 2016 is a top priority for the ME/NH AC.

b. Insitu Burning (ISB): The current Region 1 Insitu Burning pre-authorization agreement and Unified Command Decision Verification Checklist were developed in 1998 and are also due for an update. The ME/NH AC work group may want to initiate an update to the ISB plan and Decision Worksheet independently or in partnership with representatives from other New England Area Committees through the RRT.

c. Response Plan Template Development: Work has begun on developing templates that will dramatically expedite provision of required tactical plans and completed ICS forms during a spill response. Completed templates include ICS 201s, ICS 202s, ICS 234s, Oiled Debris Disposal Plans, etc. A total of 27 potential plans that could be needed have been identified. Priorities include: Decanting Plan, Waste Management Plans and Prioritized Resources at Risk.

d. Ports of Refuge: The ME/NH areas Ports of Refuge guidance is less complete than the ports of refuge guidance developed in some other areas around the country. While the ME/NH ACP references the USCG Commandant Instruction and IMO guidance on Ports of Refuge, no pre-planning has been done to identify potential locations, their attributes and potential trade-offs involved with using various locations. This is another project that could be pursued by an expanded multi agency/industry workgroup.

6. Geographic Response Plan Workgroup: Significant state funding will not likely be available in 2016 to contract out substantial GRS testing and deployments. However, continued efforts to review, test, update, and distribute accurate, user-friendly Geographic Response Strategies will be implemented. Specific Goals for 2016 include:

a. Update and reformat GRPs: This may include adding aerial photos and other photos for each GRP.

b. Develop ICS 204 template and top 10 GRPs which would include specific requirements for deploying the strategy including number of boats/people required (including minimum horsepower), length of boom, nearest boat ramps and access points, tie off locations and any specific concerns or considerations related to deployment of the strategy.

c. In New Hampshire:

- A-30 Spinney Creek: Add better information to the GRS about the tide gate and what it does/doesn't do and reconsider current booming strategy.
- A-31-1: This strategy did not go well last time it was tested by the PRC. A draft change to the boom design needs to be worked out and tested.
- A-32-1: This strategy has never been deployed and it is a bit trickier with the permanent security fencing in that area now. It definitely needs to be tested some day.
- A-37: Chauncy Creek: There has been a lot of discussion about trying to improve this strategy.
- A-23-1: Bellamy River: This strategy needs to be tested.

d. In Maine: Conduct one analysis / deployment for each of the 3 coastal regions

- Portland Region
- Augusta Region
- Bangor Region

e. Environmental resource agency reps are continuing an ongoing effort to prioritize critical natural resources along the Maine coast. Some work was completed in the 2014 ACP update to identify and prioritize sensitive economic and historically valuable coastal resources.

f. Also, NOAA has begun an effort to update the EVI maps along the entire Maine and New Hampshire coastline.

7. Joint Response Team (JRT)/CANUSLANT: A JRT meeting was held at SNNE in December 2014 and an Environmental Workshop was held in June 2015 in Saint Andrews, Canada with a follow-up meeting in Boston in November 2015 to address the following 4 issues:

1. Joint Environmental Team/Joint Environmental Unit
2. Alternative Response Technologies
3. Resources – including updates to the Sensitive Environments Plan
4. Joint Area Command

Follow-up work is due in each of these areas which will require input from ME/NH Area Committee members under the coordination of the First Coast Guard District. An update of the Atlantic Annex of the Joint Contingency Plan is due to be signed in June 2016.

The next Full Scale CANUSLANT Exercise is currently scheduled for FY2018 with a TTX in FY2016 or 2017.

8. Portsmouth Oil Spill Response Working Group Exercise Lessons Learned: Another major focus of work efforts during 2016 will be to enhance preparedness by implementing lessons learned from the successful POSRWG exercise that was held on October 14, 2015. A detailed list of specific Recommendations to address “Areas For Improvement” were developed as part of the exercise After Action Report and are being addressed by key agency representatives.

9. Portsmouth Workgroup: The Portsmouth Oil Spill Response Workgroup (POSRW) was officially established as a workgroup under the Maine-New Hampshire Area committee on January 5, 2012 to improve response capabilities, maximize preparedness and emphasize safe work practices for oil spill response in the New Hampshire and Southern Maine coastal areas. The POSRW currently includes the following subcommittees to address specific issues in the NH and Southern ME region: Geographic Response Plan, Exercise, Communications, Outreach/Education, and Equipment.

10. Penobscot Bay Workgroup: The Industry-led Penobscot River Oil Pollution Abatement Committee (PROPAC) made up of ten businesses and agencies in mid-coast Maine including Webber Energy, Sprague Energy, Cianbro, Maine DEP and the Coast Guard will continue to improve spill response preparedness in the Penobscot Bay area through monthly meetings, training and exercises.

11. Government Initiated Unannounced Exercises (GIUE): The Coast Guard’s Marine Environmental Response (MER) program manager’s distributed a draft policy letter in JAN 2015 promoting expanded use of GIUEs (4 per year). SNNE would also like to invite EPA, NH DES and ME DEP to participate. These exercises are based on the response to a 50 barrel spill scenario (including notification and equipment deployment) over 4 hours.

12. Annual Seminar Workgroup: Due to schedule conflicts and competing priorities a seminar will not be held in the Spring of 2016. Plans have been initiated to potentially hold a one-day seminar on a theme related to “Spill Response in the Digital World” in the Fall of 2016.

13. Command Post Workgroup: The workgroup successfully tested and evaluated the small ICP at the Washington County Community College, Calais, ME during CANUSLANT 2013. Larger ICPs have been identified in Bangor, Augusta and elsewhere if needed for a Type 1 or Type 2 incident. Information on these prospective ICPs were included in the recent update to the ME/NH ACP. As time and budgets permit, a **visit should be scheduled to review the capabilities available at these prospective ICPs.** Additionally, new enhancements are in the works for the pre-designated ICP in SNNE’s Monument Square Offices in Portland, ME.

14. Training: Coast Guard sponsored ICS 300 courses are scheduled for April 5-8 and August 23-26 at the Coast Guard’s Monument Square Offices. An ICS 339 course is scheduled for May 3-4 and an ICS 400 course is scheduled for May 5th also at the Coast Guard’s Monument Square

Offices in Portland, Maine. NH DES is considering pursuing training on boom anchoring techniques and slow water booming. Steve Lehmann, the NOAA SSC has again offered to provide quarterly training to ME/NH Area responders on a variety of spill response related topics. Follow-up is required to fully take advantage of this training opportunity.

15. Railroad Transport of Crude Oil: The emergence of railroad transport of crude oil through New Hampshire and Maine to refineries in New Brunswick continues to raise concerns.

16. AC Equipment List Update: The annual update of the ME/NH Area Committee's Equipment/Resource inventory is nearing completion and will be made available via ME DEP's website and referenced in the ME/NH ACP.

17. Regional Plan for sharing equipment and personnel: There has been some discussion regarding establishing a plan for identifying what response equipment and response personnel are available who can cross-state borders to assist with spill response. A plan for enabling and funding mutual aid across state borders also needs to be established. This would provide critical training opportunities for state resource and response personnel. The ME/NH AC can support this initiative but RRT1 should likely take the lead.

18. Resolve HAZMAT Requirements: The current OSHA "rule" of 24-hour minimum is unrealistic given how little time most of our natural resource staff spend on oil spill response planning and so, in most cases, it is simply being ignored. We need something that is more focused and appropriate to what they would actually be doing to justify this time investment to our managers.

19. Fishery Opening and Closure Guidelines: Reconvene the Fishery Opening and Closure Workgroup to develop guidelines. Potential members include: New Hampshire: DES, F&G and Health, Maine: DEP, DMR & Health, USCG, NOAA: SSC, NMFS (GARFO), Fishing Community, and FDA.

20. Alberta Tar Sands Crude Oil: Oil Sands Products from Alberta, Canada are not currently transported through Maine or New Hampshire but the AC desires to continue to track developments in this area that may impact NNE. Construction of the Energy East Pipeline transporting Oil Sands Products to Saint John, NB is scheduled for completion in 2018. This is forecasted to more than double tanker traffic from Saint John in the Gulf of Maine to over 280 tankers per year. Some of these will be VLCC's transporting crude oil to refineries around the world. This will dramatically increase the volume of oil transiting the Gulf of Maine and the commensurate risk of a marine oil spill. The ME/NH AC needs to track this potential risk and prepare accordingly

21. Offshore Drilling: Proposed expanded oil and gas drilling off the coasts of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick was discussed during Joint Response Team Meetings in October 2013, July 2014 and November 2015. It appears that prospective impacts/risks to New England are limited at this time.